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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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74 ILLINOIS COUNTIES APPROVED FOR EMERGENCY HAYING OR GRAZING OF CRP ACRES

SANDWICH, Ill., July 10—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced that due to adverse weather conditions, certain counties in Illinois have been approved for emergency haying or grazing of Conservation Reserve Program Acreage.

Madigan said haying or grazing CRP acres will be allowed in 74 counties that have already been individually approved for USDA's livestock feed programs or for emergency haying and grazing of Acreage Conservation Reserve and Conserving Use Acreage.

“Although we are allowing haying or grazing on CRP acreage in these counties, we remain committed to the environmental protections that are the heart of the Conservation Reserve Program,” Madigan said.

The approved counties are: Adams, Boone, Brown, Bureau, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clarke, Clay, Coles, Cook, Crawford, Cumberland, Douglas, DeKalb, DeWitt, DuPage, Edgar, Effingham, Fayette, Ford, Fulton, Greene, Grundy, Hancock, Henderson, Henry, Iroquois, Jasper, Jersey, Jo Davies, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Knox, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Marion, Marshall, Mason, Menard, Mercer, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, McDonough, McHenry, McLean, Ogle, Peoria, Piatt, Pike, Putnam, Rock Island, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Stark, Stephenson, Tazwell, Vermillion, Warren, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago, and Woodford.

“Any additional Illinois counties subsequently approved for livestock feed programs or ACR/CU haying and grazing will also be considered eligible for these emergency provisions,” Madigan said.

Producers must first apply and be approved for haying or grazing CRP acreage at the county office of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Madigan said either haying or grazing—but not both on the same acreage—will be allowed from today through Sept. 30. All haying must be completed or livestock removed from the land by the end of the day on Sept. 30.

Only 75 percent of the acreage under contract may be hayed and only one cutting of hay will be allowed. The hay may be fed to the producer's own livestock or sold.

The entire acreage may be grazed but only by a maximum of 75 percent of the normal stocking rate established by the Soil Conservation Service. Producers may graze their own stock or lease the acreage to other livestock owners subject to the same conditions.

Producers who elect to hay or graze their CRP acreage or lease the property for grazing under this allowance will have their CRP annual rental payment reduced. The reduction will be based on the value of forage that can be removed from the acreage, as determined by the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee.

Madigan emphasized that producers must contact their county ASCS office for full information and permission to participate in this emergency program before beginning to hay or graze in order to maintain CRP contract compliance.

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Issued: July 10, 1992

EXTENSION PROJECTS HELP NATIVE AMERICANS

WASHINGTON—On the Fort Hall Reservation in southeastern Idaho, Native American children are learning new skills, developing healthy attitudes about life, and having fun doing so.

Their teachers are not Ph.D.s, but teenage mentors—community role models. These teens are participating in an Extension youth project, designed to encourage community well-being.

The Fort Hall project is one of 28 Indian Reservation Projects funded by USDA's Extension Service and currently operating in 21 states.

These projects provide education and technical assistance focusing on

agriculture, horticulture, 4-H and youth leadership, health and nutrition.

To better understand how these projects work, let's take a look at the Fort Hall project and three other examples. The Fort Hall Reservation Project In Idaho

The Fort Hall Reservation Project is divided into two components, the 4-H/After School Program, and the Agriculture Program.

At Fort Hall Elementary, the After School Program involves Kindergarten through sixth—grade children in supervised computer-based study activities. They also learn food preparation, health and nutrition, wildlife and basic agriculture.

“The kids really love it,” said Nola Osborne, Fort Hall Reservation Extension agent, “The program fosters good study habits and encourages the pursuit of positive lifestyles.”

Most of the students in the program are from limited resource and single-parent families. To qualify, parents must be working, or furthering their education.

Some of the reservation's teenagers act as mentors and provide training and supervision for the younger children.

Topics taught to the older youth include preventing substance abuse, suicide avoidance, leadership development, self-esteem and employment skills.

Livestock is the principal agricultural activity on the Fort Hall Reservation. The agriculture program provides livestock producers with management assistance education, and will investigate the possibilities of developing viable grain and horticulture enterprises. Another focus is sustainable agriculture.

According to Lonnie Racehorse, head of the Fort Hall Tribal Council, the agriculture side of the program has a lot of support in the Indian community. The farmers and ranchers see where instruction in sustainable agriculture could improve the community's quality of life. “We know our wells are contaminated from prior pesticide and herbicide use,” Racehorse said. “Low-input agriculture technologies can help us move away from using these kinds of measures.”

With agriculture, horticulture and management training, residents on the reservation will be able to produce more items for the local grocery store, said Extension District Director Ray Prigge. This improves economic development and could boost self-esteem among many residents, Prigge said. Alaska's Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Region Project

The Doyon/Tanana Chiefs region of Interior Alaska is larger than

Arizona and New Mexico combined. Extension Agent Gena Delucchi must often fly to the Athabascan villages where she works. These villages are not accessible by roads, and a trip by boat would take several days.

Agriculture is not traditional in the Athabascan culture. Delucchi teaches agriculture. She focuses on home gardening, livestock rearing, and food preservation. These areas complement the hunting and fishing subsistence lifestyle traditionally practiced by the Athabascan people.

"Most everything here has to be flown in," Delucchi said. "This makes store-bought food very expensive."

The Athabascan people appreciate learning about agriculture. They see this as a means of supplementing their food supply and improving their dietary health, she said.

Delucchi's goals are to increase the number of Athabascan households involved in subsistence agriculture, to increase the yearly food supply, and to improve economic development by assisting with small commercial ventures.

Another Extension goal is developing new crop varieties in the area. To assist in this effort, Delucchi will test existing varieties for their suitability under current growing conditions. Minnesota's White Earth Reservation Project

The personal growth of Indian youth is Extension's focus on the White Earth Reservation.

"This program gives us skills and something to do," said Julie Struthers. Struthers is a participant in Minnesota's White Earth Reservation Project's Leadership Service Program. "We get to talk to younger kids about drugs, alcohol, self-esteem—we don't just sit around in meetings," she said.

According to Margaret Braaten, Mahnomen County Extension Director, the White Earth Project's goals are to expand youth volunteerism and community service. By developing young peoples' leadership capabilities, the program helps encourage their work with others.

In addition to the training, participants are also involved in travel activities. In the recently completed "Capitol Experience," several students traveled to St. Paul. They visited Minnesota State Senator Roger Moe, toured various legislative and historical sites and attended a Minnesota Timberwolves basketball game. "These were new experiences for many of our students," Braaten said.

"We try to encourage Indian youth to get involved with traditional 4-H activities such as team building, nutrition and after-school programs," she

said. “We also stress their cultural awareness by involving them in activities unique to the Indian heritage.” Pine Ridge Reservation Project In South Dakota

Similar to the Fort Hall Project, the Pine Ridge Project has a dual purpose. “On one hand we work with volunteers and establish 4-H/Youth clubs,” said George Black, Extension West District Supervisor. “Our program also offers ranch management and horticulture education.”

“It’s important from the start to build credibility, to be culturally sensitive, and to listen to people,” said Black.

To improve farm and ranch management skills, Extension agents at Pine Ridge teach crop and livestock production practices. They also teach safe pesticide use and soil and water conservation measures.

The project’s 4-H/Youth Program is a cooperative effort. A number of organizations are joining in support. “The church, the school, the YMCA, the Girl and Boy Scouts are all involved. Good things are happening and we’re doing it together,” Black said. Overview

Extension’s Indian Reservation Projects are funded through a special congressional appropriation authorized in the 1990 Farm Bill. Now in their second year, the 28 projects have shared a total of about \$2.5 million. The projects are a response by Congress to a Bureau of Indian Affairs recommendation to locate Extension programs on Indian reservations and tribal lands.

By teaching people health and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, horticulture and more, the Indian Reservation Extension Projects are making a difference—helping people to help themselves. For additional information contact Hollis Hall, National Program Leader, Extension Indian Reservation Projects, Extension Service-U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-8205.

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USDA TO RULE ON THE "FLAVR SAVR" TOMATO

WASHINGTON, July 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to deregulate the Calgene, Inc., "Flavr Savr" tomato with respect to its restrictions on genetically engineered plants, a USDA official announced today.

Calgene, an agribusiness, biotechnology firm in Davis, Calif., petitioned USDA to grow its bio-engineered tomato without securing further USDA permits. Calgene also has petitioned the Food and Drug Administration for this tomato to be considered food, just like any other tomato.

"After reviewing information submitted by Calgene, as well as other relevant data, we are proposing to issue a ruling that there is no reason for us to regulate the 'Flavr Savr' tomato any longer," said Terry Medley, director of biotechnology, biologics and environmental protection for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"However, since this is the first petition of its type and we want to be sure that everybody with views on the issue has a chance to air them, we are opening a comment period," Medley said.

The "Flavr Savr" tomato was genetically engineered to turn off a gene involved in ripening, thereby extending the fruit's shelf life. The tomato can be harvested at a more mature stage, packed and shipped long distance just like any other tomato and still keep for several days before becoming soft.

Medley said APHIS officials have the responsibility to assure that no plant pest is introduced or disseminated in releasing a bio-engineered plant. APHIS reviewers focus on the biology, propagation and cultivation of the plant. They examine the source of the engineered genes, the vector used to transfer them and the stability of the insertion.

Calgene submitted information before proceeding with eight field trials of the tomato in three states over five growing seasons. APHIS reviewers found no plant pest risk associated with conducting the field trials.

Notice of the action is scheduled for publication in the July 14 Federal Register. Comments will be considered if received on or before Aug. 28. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket

92-087-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

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USDA ISSUES AMENDMENT TO SOYBEAN PROMOTION ORDER

WASHINGTON, July 13—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has amended the Soybean Promotion and Research Order by modifying assessment collection procedures for soybeans pledged as collateral for Commodity Credit Corporation loans.

The order implements the national soybean promotion and research program authorized by the 1990 farm bill.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the amendment requires that CCC collect assessments from proceeds of loans only in cases where soybeans are forfeited in lieu of loan repayment. The CCC will remit the assessments to the appropriate state or national soybean board.

"This amendment will reduce costs and save time by eliminating the requirement for the CCC to collect assessments from the proceeds of all loans," Haley said.

The soybean program, which became effective July 9, 1991, levies an assessment of 0.5 of 1 percent of the net market value of soybeans producers market. Assessments fund activities designed to strengthen the position of soybeans in the marketplace.

Details of the amendment will appear in the July 14 Federal Register. Copies and additional information are available from Ralph L. Tapp, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch, AMS, USDA, Room 2624-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

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USDA ANNOUNCES REDUCTION IN 1992 PEANUT EFFECTIVE- POUNDAGE QUOTAS

WASHINGTON, July 14—Effective-farm-poundage quotas for the 1992 crop if peanuts have been reduced by 48,633,857 pounds (24,317 short tons) according to Keith Bjerke, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Bjerke said the reductions were made because of disaster program payments made to producers for losses in the production of 1990 and 1991 crop peanuts.

"The law that authorized disaster program payments for producers of peanuts required a reduction in the quantity of undermarketings of quota peanuts from a farm if disaster payments were made with respect to such quantity," Bjerke said. "These reduced undermarketings resulted in reductions in the effective farm poundage quotas."

After these reductions, the total of the 1992 crop effective farm poundage quotas for peanuts is approximately 1,665,832 short tons.

The reductions in effective-poundage quotas, by state, in short tons, are as follows:

Alabama	4,758
Florida	478
Georgia	16,347
Oklahoma	952
Texas	1,580
Other States	202
Total	24,317

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USDA REMOVES FRUIT FLY QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS

WASHINGTON, July 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today removed oriental-fruit-fly quarantine restrictions from parts of Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in California. The quarantine was imposed last fall.

“Fruit fly outbreaks like this occur at great cost to growers and the government,” said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine with USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “We are pleased the infestation is now eradicated and we can remove the quarantine.”

Included in the quarantined area were one lemon packinghouse and 600 acres of commercial citrus and grapes. Lee said his agency developed safeguards to allow the packinghouse to continue packing and shipping lemons that originated from outside the affected area.

However, fruits and vegetables grown within the quarantined areas had to be federally certified before being shipped interstate.

Removal of the quarantine was announced in an interim rule that became effective on July 9 and is scheduled for publication in the July 15 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if received on or before Sept. 14.

An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 91-149-2 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Lee said quarantines remain in effect in the Los Angeles basin because of Mediterranean fruit fly infestations.

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USDA BANS MOVEMENT OF HAWAIIAN AVOCADOS TO MAINLAND

WASHINGTON, July 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced Hawaiian producers may no longer ship untreated Sharwil variety avocados to the U.S. mainland.

“We had allowed these shipments for certain growers who followed harvesting and handling procedures designed to prevent pest infestations,” said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine in USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

“However, because we have found fruit fly larvae and pupae in avocados that were handled in the prescribed manner, we now believe those requirements are insufficient.”

Hawaii is home to a number of potentially devastating agricultural pests, including the Mediterranean fruit fly, the Oriental fruit fly and the melon fly. Periodic infestations that occur on the U.S. mainland are very costly to eradicate.

APHIS halted certification of Sharwil avocados for transport to the mainland last February immediately following a larvae find in an avocado destined for shipment. Additional detections since then warranted today’s publication of an interim rule to disallow the shipments altogether.

Lee said his staff is now working with USDA researchers to determine if there are any conditions under which Sharwil avocado shipments could safely resume.

The interim rule is scheduled for publication in the July 15 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 14. An original and three copies of written comments referring to Docket 92-081-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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U.S. AND CANADA PLAN MEAT AND POULTRY IMPORT RE-INSPECTION CHANGES

WASHINGTON, July 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture and its Canadian counterpart, Agriculture Canada, have developed a plan to make their meat and poultry import re-inspection systems more comparable to one another, Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan said today.

“Meat and poultry products crossing the U.S.-Canadian border have been subject to re-inspection practices which are not always equivalent,” Madigan said.

“In the spirit of the U.S.-Canadian Free Trade Agreement, we are going to make our import re-inspection systems more equivalent while maintaining our high standards of consumer protection,” Madigan said.

Under the understanding, the following changes will be effective Aug. 10:

—Re-inspection frequency for meat and poultry products imported into the United States and Canada will be set at equivalent levels. Shipments that are refused entry or not presented for re-inspection will be subject to an equivalent system of follow-up procedures in each country.

—Both countries have agreed not to use streamlined inspection procedures for meat and poultry imports that were adopted by the United States in 1989. Under those procedures, Canadian inspectors were responsible for selecting samples for re-inspection prior to shipment to the United States. Now, samples will be selected by U.S. import inspectors.

—Both countries will work toward providing “destination import reinspection,” under which products can be re-inspected at the border or at additional inspection sites closer to the destination of the products. Canadian products entering the United States will be re-inspected only at approved import establishments staffed by USDA import inspectors.

In addition to these changes, both countries will develop and implement equivalent systems for automated tracking of meat and poultry shipments and inspection results. The United States has a tracking system already in place, and Canada is scheduled to implement its system in August.

U.S. law requires countries that export meat and poultry products to the United States have inspection systems at least equal to the U.S. system.

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NO FINDLEY PAYMENTS FOR 1991-CROP WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS

WASHINGTON, July 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that no increased deficiency payments, known as Findley payments, will be made for the 1991 crops of wheat, barley and oats.

Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, said the payments will not be made because the 12-month national weighted average market prices exceeded the basic price support levels.

Findley payments, part of the 1991 wheat and feed grains price support and production adjustment programs, are made when the basic price support level for a commodity crop is reduced to maintain domestic and export markets for that commodity. These payments are made only when the 12-month national weighted average market price is less than the price support level before it was reduced.

The national average market prices received by producers from June 1991 through May 1992 for wheat, barley and oats were \$3.00, \$2.10 and \$1.20 per bushel, respectively. The basic price support level for each of these commodities was \$2.52, \$1.54 and \$0.97 per bushel, respectively.

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CERTAIN MAINE COUNTIES APPROVED FOR EMERGENCY HAYING OR GRAZING

WASHINGTON, July 15—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today that due to adverse weather conditions in parts of Maine, five counties in the state have been approved for emergency haying or grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acreage.

The approved counties are: Aroostook, Franklin, Lincoln, Oxford and Somerset.

Madigan said haying and grazing of CRP acres is being allowed in those counties that have already been individually approved for USDA's livestock feed programs or emergency haying and grazing of Acreage Conservation Reserve and Conserving Use acreage.

"We would prefer not to interrupt the intended environmental purpose of the CRP, but when natural disasters occur the welfare of our farmers must come first," said Madigan.

"Any additional counties subsequently approved for livestock feed programs or ACR/CU haying and grazing will also be considered eligible for these emergency provisions," Madigan said.

The producer must first apply and be approved for haying or grazing on CRP acreage at the county office of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Madigan said either haying or grazing—but not both on the same acreage—will be allowed from July 14 through September 30. All haying must be completed or livestock removed from the land by the end of the day on Sept. 30.

Only 75 percent of the acreage under contract may be hayed and only one cutting of hay will be allowed. The hay may be fed to the producer's own livestock or sold.

The entire acreage may be grazed but by only up to 75 percent of the normal stocking rate established by the Soil Conservation Service. Producers may graze their own stock or lease the acreage to other livestock owners subject to the same conditions.

Producers who elect to hay or graze their CRP acreage or lease the property for grazing under this allowance will have their CRP annual

rental payment reduced. The reduction will be based on the value of forage that can be removed from the acreage, as determined by the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee.

Madigan emphasized that producers must contact their county ASCS office for full information and permission to participate in this emergency program before beginning to hay or graze in order to maintain CRP contract compliance.

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CERTAIN OREGON COUNTIES APPROVED FOR EMERGENCY HAYING OR GRAZING

WASHINGTON, July 15—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today that due to adverse weather conditions in parts of Oregon, certain counties in the state have been approved for emergency haying or grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acreage.

Madigan said haying or grazing CRP acres will be allowed in five counties. These counties have already been individually approved for USDA's livestock feed programs or emergency haying and grazing of Acreage Conservation Reserve and Conserving Use acreage.

"Because of the environmental objectives of the CRP, we would prefer not to hay or graze these acres," Madigan said. "We are responding to an emergency situation faced by farmers in these counties. Their livelihood and families must come first."

The approved counties are: Crook, Harney, Lake, Malheur and Wallowa.

"Any additional Oregon counties subsequently approved for livestock feed programs or ACR/CU haying and grazing will also be considered eligible for these emergency provisions," Madigan said.

A producer must first apply and be approved for haying or grazing on CRP acreage at the county office of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Madigan said either haying or grazing—but not both on the same acreage—will be allowed today through September 30. All haying must

be completed or livestock removed from the land by the end of the day on Sept. 30.

Only 75 percent of the acreage under contract may be hayed and only one cutting of hay will be allowed. The hay may be fed to the producer's own livestock or sold.

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Madigan emphasized that producers must contact their county ASCS office for full information and permission to participate in this emergency program before beginning to hay or graze in order to maintain CRP contract compliance.

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